

Commission on the Status of Black Males (CSBM)

Minutes of February 9, 2005

Attendance: Members: William Knox, Jim Sims (Chair), Larry Brown, David Hummons, Cedric Harris (Secretary), Genevieve Williamson and Paulette Dilworth. **Staff:** Craig Brenner, Liaison. **Guests:** Aniko Bahr, MCCSC Office of Multicultural Education and Services; George Tardy.

Minutes of January 10, 2005 approved.

A. MCCSC Diversity Forum

Larry Brown attended the first meeting in January. The next planning meeting is February 17 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., and the first public meeting is scheduled from March 3, 2005. The meetings are held at the MCCSC Administration Building.

Discussion: There was a concern that the forum planning should not lose its focus on Black Males. Without focus there is a possibility of talking about every problem. At the town hall meeting, parents of Black girls spoke in addition to parents of Black boys. There is a new emphasis in MCCSC on diversity, working with administration, faculty, students and parents.

Aniko remarked that Berit Brewer is a school board member who also sits on the MCCSC Diversity Forum. The forum cannot be used as an appeal process. Also, there is a need for an additional Black male member of the forum panel to serve as the moderator/facilitator. Possible names for consideration include Eric Love, Eduardo Rhodes, Frank Motley, etc. As for controlling public comments, Larry suggested a two - three minute time limit in order to give everyone a chance to speak and share his/her concerns. Superintendent Maloy plans to attend when he can. Jim commented that rumors grow when everything is done behind closed doors. There is a need for more transparency at pre-expulsion hearings by allowing parents to bring someone with them into the hearing. Currently it is parents only. David remarked that once a student is in the process/system, the Forum cannot talk about it (as determined by Dr. Maloy).

As for representation, Larry is the CSBM representative in the first seat. The second seat will be filled on a rotating basis. William intends to attend meetings when he is not out of town. MCCSC will provide six members (Janis Hazelrigg, Bev Smith, Carrie Gross, Diane Hanks, Gary Plaford and Aniko Bahr). Other members include Cornelius Wright, Nancy Lumbley, James Black, Rev. McCoy, Rev. Rose, Ron Thompson, Patricia Efiom, Alan Blankstein, Amy Dowel and Berit Brewer. Paulette added that Bloomington is considered an urban school district based upon the state's definition from population/census data. There is a notion concerning school/classroom climate that kids may not want to share with someone in the schools. Aniko reminded the group that the Black Male Focus Group has been on the agenda.

B. Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) Recommendations

Jim reminded the Commission that Guy Loftman came to the last meeting to discuss the Racial Justice Task Force recommendations regarding the criminal justice system. Paulette suggested looking at an alternative juvenile justice system, and David reminded the group there is no longer a single juvenile court. Instead, two or three judges will handle juvenile cases. Larry hopes judges will use consistent guidelines. Paulette has concerns over access. The disproportionately affected don't have the resources or skills to avoid the criminal justice system. The CSBM should focus some energy on educating the public. There's a program in Florida that has kids on a court who hear cases of shoplifting or vandalism. Craig asked if the CSBM should work on this request or should someone go to the Racial Justice Task Force instead? Or should we invite Judge Taliaferro to a CSBM meeting to talk about this? Larry reminded us that when dealing with juveniles, there are privacy issues. Paulette believes that Courts that are proactive are looking for alternative means with jails overflowing. The RJTF report seems to apply more to adults than juveniles. Should we put more focus on juveniles? Jim suggested the Commission

support the RJTF recommendations, and all agreed to support them. A press release will be developed expressing our support.

C. Monroe Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Coalition

William, the new appointee, will attend once per quarter. The next meeting is on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Heidi Martin is the chair of the Tobacco group.

D. State Commission

Steve Ingram is the director of the Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males. The next meeting, Feb. 11 at 11:00 a.m., will focus on planning the National Conference. House Bill 1188 – emergency meeting – Jim attended a meeting in Indianapolis that lasted three hours. David stated that we do need representation at the State level as other commissions have a different focus. Genny believes we need to stay focused locally. To go up to Indianapolis often takes a whole day. David suggested that if we received the minutes from the Indiana Commission, then we could offer input via email. Genny suggested we could do a workshop at the State conference on what the Bloomington CSBM does.

Craig reminded the commission that it has to prepare an annual report for the Mayor and Common Council. Jim said he will prepare it.

E. Dallas Easton

His mentoring program B.O.T.H. (Brothers Outreaching to Help) has been allowed to enter the schools. He has four mentees. He plans to operate with a three-tiered model: high school student, college student and community member. He is looking for CSBM support and sponsorship. Jim suggested that we can endorse B.O.T.H. without sponsoring the program. George said he wants bodies: Men!

F. Fall Planning Retreat. This item should be moved to the top of March's meeting agenda.

G. Meeting Dates. Next meeting is Wednesday, March 9, 2005, at 4:00 p.m.

H. Membership

George Tardy attended the meeting to indicate his interest in being a member of the CSBM. He attended the town hall meeting and developed an interest at that time. He is a doctoral student in the IU School of Education. Craig commented that there are no current openings. David attested to George's qualities. William asked about adding numbers, and David suggested changing the ordinance to include a student. Jim believes we can't do that but we can have ex-officio memberships, i.e. Aniko Bahr from MCCSC.

Paulette suggested that the CSBM do something to recognize a Black male from MCCSC. This should be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Cedric Harris.